"In The Hollow of His Hand."

The great and restless ocean rolls
Resistless on the sand.
Yet every wave is measured in
The hollow of His hand.

Each separate drop that teems with life,
Each billow far from land,
Or angry-crested breaker, knows
The hollow of His hand.

Help us, O Lord, for faith grows dim;
We do not understand;
Our seas of woe sure *must* o'erflow
The hollow of Thy hand.

Teach us that all are measured there,
A sounding deep and grand;
There are no depths of grief *without*
The hollow of Thy hand.

Each throb of woe, each weary pain
Of head, or heart, or hand,
The long-drawn hours of sickness—all
Are measured in Thy hand.

These waves can never rise too high,
For Thou will help us stand.
Dear Lord, we cast our burdens in
The hollow of Thy hand.

How to Deal With Offending Members.

From the Gospel Messenger once Published by the Congregational Brethren.

1st. Sins against individuals.
2nd. Sins against the Lord.
3rd. Sins against the Holy Ghost.
4th. Members may do as they please.

Much has been said and written of late years as to how to deal with offending members, and as the impression has gone far and wide that the Brethren have no church government, and that they let their members do just as they please, we have concluded to consider this matter briefly, and tell our readers what our church government is, and how we ought to deal with offending members and why.

Christ has plainly and in unmistakable terms, told His disciples how to adjust personal trespasses in the 18th chapter of Matthew. Now, if one member trespasses against another member, the offended member is to go to the offending party and tell him his fault between himself and the offending party alone; if the offending party hears the offended party, the matter is settled; but if the offending party will not hear the offended party, the offended party must go and take with him one or two more, and if the offending party will not hear them, he, the offended party must tell it to the church, and if the offending party will not hear the church, the offended party, not the church, is to hold the offending party or person as an heathen man and a publican.—Matthew 18th chap., 15th, 16th and 17th verses.

Now, here is the law of the Lord on personal trespasses: Now, as the offending party cannot see his error, or is stubborn when the other party has obeyed the Lord in all his instructions, even to the submitting of the case, to the discretion and judgment of the church, and though the church was compelled to bind the decision or seal the verdict, the church has no right to cast the offending member away. The Master did not say in the case under consideration, Let him be unto the church as an heathen man and a publican, but let him be unto t-h-e-e as an heathen man and a publican.—Math. 18 : 17.

Now, the church should not be overcome of evil, but should overcome evil with good, and by so doing heap coals of fire on his head, (Romans 12 : 20 and 21) if it does require a little self-denial on the part of the church. If by the way such offending party fails to hear the instructions of holy writ, and the entreaties of the brethren, and goes to the communion table, knowing that his brother hath aught against him, and will not go and first become reconciled (Matthew 5 : 23, 24, and 25) by confessing his fault, not to the church, but to the individual against whom he trespassed, (Luke 17 : 3, 4,) he eats and drinks damnation to himself, (1st Cor. 11 : 29,) not discerning the Lord's body; that is, he does not heed the admonitions or discern the instructions which the Lord's body, the church, has given him. But he does not eat or drink damnation to the *offended party* nor the *church*, but like Judas, to himself. And as Judas' conscience condemned him, so will such offending parties under such circumstances condemn him.

Judas never troubled the Master nor the brethren, after he left the table, (John 13 : 30) for he felt that he was condemned having ate unworthily, (1st Cor. 11 : 28, 29) although the Lord did not examine Judas, nor drive him away; neither did He refuse to eat because Judas went to the table. The trouble was, Judas failed to examine *himself*, and therefore brought condemnation on himself.

If, however, in case of trespass of one against another, if at any time the offending party returns to the offended party and confesses his fault, (Luke 17 : 4) he must forgive him; and the church has nothing to do with forgiving sins which one person commits against another. Sins must either be against individuals, or against the Lord, or against the Holy Ghost. Those against individuals can be forgiven by individuals; those against the Lord must be forgiven by the Lord; those against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, (Math. 12 : 31) but must be atoned for if ever satisfied, which we will show under the third head of this article, but as for sinning against the church, we do not understand so well. If sin is the transgression, of law (1 John 3 : 4) and the church works altogether in the name of the Lord, she has no law of her own to transgress, therefore can pardon no sins. But if the church makes laws, she sins against the Lord. (Rev. 22 : 18). If the church makes a testament she must die to seal it, or it is of no force (Heb. 9 : 16, 17, 18.)

SINS AGAINST THE LORD.

Through the weakness of the flesh, Peter denied his Lord and Master, and when he was charged with being one of the Lord's disciples when the Lord was about to be condemned, he got angry and cursed and swore, (Math. xxvi : 74.) Did the Lord cast him away, or did he on that occasion, or any other, make him confess his fault? We emphatically say *No.*

But in view of the great trial which Peter had to pass through, the good, benevolent and kind Savior said unto him, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted (evidently from the error into which he fell), strengthen thy brethren. (Luke xxii : 31, 32.) Here is the example of the Lord on sins which arise because of the weakness of the flesh (Math. xxii. 41); but there is no church meeting implied here. Agreeable to this, John says: If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. (1 John v : 16.)

Again: Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him) James v : 19, 20); Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. Here we have the testimony of two more great witnesses on how to deal with offending members, but have failed to find any *church hauling* done, or any one turned out into the world.

Notice, John, in his instructions on sins which are not unto death, says: "If any may see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask;" that is to say he shall pray for him. Again: Paul says, "Admonish one another." And again, them that sin rebuke before all that others, also may fear. (Tim. v : 20.)

Sins which are not unto death, must be sins which are committed through weakness, (not wilfully.) Next in order comes Paul, and he reminds the brethren that their lives are hid with Christ in God, and that Christ is all and in all, and that they should put on, therefore, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another (Col. iii : 13), if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

Now how must we forgive? Is it necessary to call a *church meeting* to forgive this wrong? We say no. For the sin was not committed directly against the church, and therefore the church has nothing directly to do with it, unless the contending parties persistently indulge, but the parties that engage in the fuss are to settle it. Paul did not say submit it to the church. The contending parties are to forgive each other, for they are both to blame more or less, as one party won't quarrel by itself.

Church meetings are we think admissible in the sense that the law of divorcement which Moses suffered was, for the hardness of the people's hearts. Christ did not condemn the *precept*, but the *deed*, The precept was a necessity. In the former case it was not so from the beginning. Neither was it so from the beginning of Christianity, in the latter case; for Christ called his followers to *peace*, and did not tell them to church haul one another. The apostles *exhorted* the brethten, Hebrews iii : 13. Hear also Paul's charge to Timothy and Titus. Does he tell those young Elders to call church meetings? We again say no. But says to Timothy (2 Tim. 4 : 2), exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. And to Titus (Tit. ii : 9), he says: Exhort servants to be obedient unto their masters. Again (Tit. ii : 15): These things teach and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. In Galatians (vi : 1, 2). We hear Paul say, Brethren if any be overtaken in fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. Once more we call attention to Rom. 14th chapter, and after you have carefully read the entire chapter, return to, and read verses 10, 11, 12, and 13. Now Brethren, we will close our remarks on the subject under this head, and proceed to notice the sin *unto death*, under the third head.

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

Christ says, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost* shall not be forgiven unto men (Matt. xii : 31), and in the 32nd verse He says, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, neither in the world to come. The sin here spoken of can evidently not be committed before one is baptized into His Holy name, and therefore *sealed*, (Eph. 1 : 13.) The Apostles says, "After that ye *believed* ye were sealed by that Holy Spirit of promise." By this *sealing* we receive the knowledge of the truth, and taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. For, "except a man be born again he connot see the kingdom of God." It must be by this sealing that our names are written in heaven. (Luke x : 20.) Now if our names are recorded in the book of life, (Rev. iii : 5), no one is able to blot them out, except the Lord, and He *will* not, except we sin against the Holy Ghost. For it is by means of the Holy Ghost that we are sealed unto the day of redemption, (Eph. iv : 30.) The sin against the Holy Ghost is, to commit any thing that will exclude from the kingdom of heaven, after one has been made partaker of the Holy Ghost, (Heb. vi : 4-6.) If they shall fall away, Paul says it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, Paul would therefore have the brethren to walk in the spirit, (evidently the Spirit into which they were baptized,) and they should not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Gal. v : 16.) With the 19th verse of this chapter Paul begins to tell us plainly what will shut one out of the kingdom of God; but mark, he is talking to those who are in the Spirit, to brethren and not to aliens. Now reader, as we have these abominable things plainly recorded in God's word, we will only ask you to read Gal. 5 chapter and Rom. 1st chapter &c., and we will proceed to tell how to deal with those who are dead to righteousness, while they live in wickedness.

When those who are called brethren, are known to be guilty of any of those evil works spoken of in Romans, and Galatians &c., when we are gathered together (Heb. x : 25), in the name of the Lord, and Paul's spirit with us (1 Cor. xi : 1, and 1 Cor. v : 4, 5), we deliver such an one to Satan as it is impossible to renew such unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame, (Heb. vi : 6.) Disobedience causes them to fall away. Peter speakes of these in his second epistle, second chapter, and particularly the 22nd verse. Jude in his general epistle, and particularly the 10th verse also speaks of these: Such mockers, and blasphemers, must be put away. These are not *tares*, as those that we spoke of under the second head of our article. These are *dead*. Jude says they are *twice*